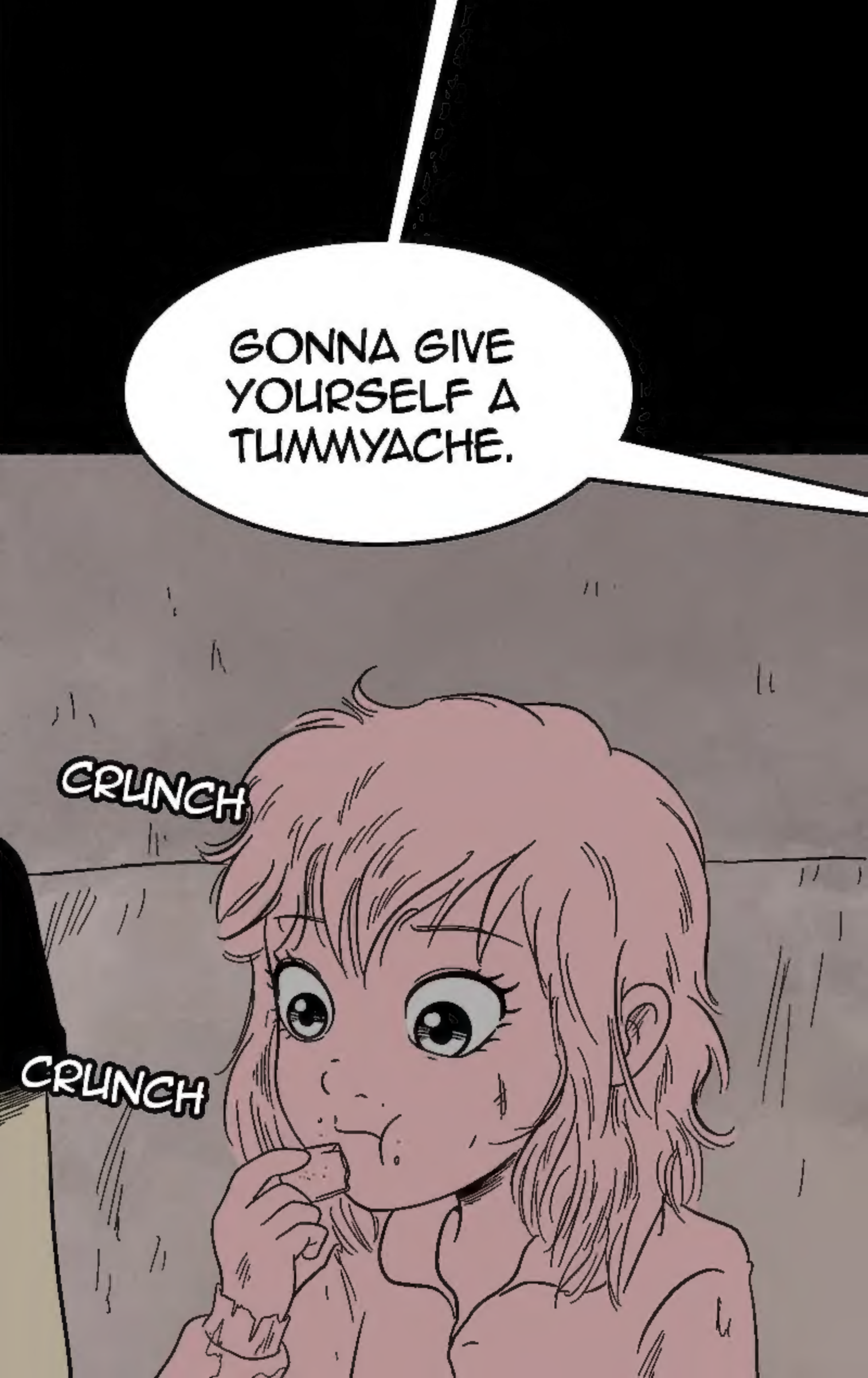
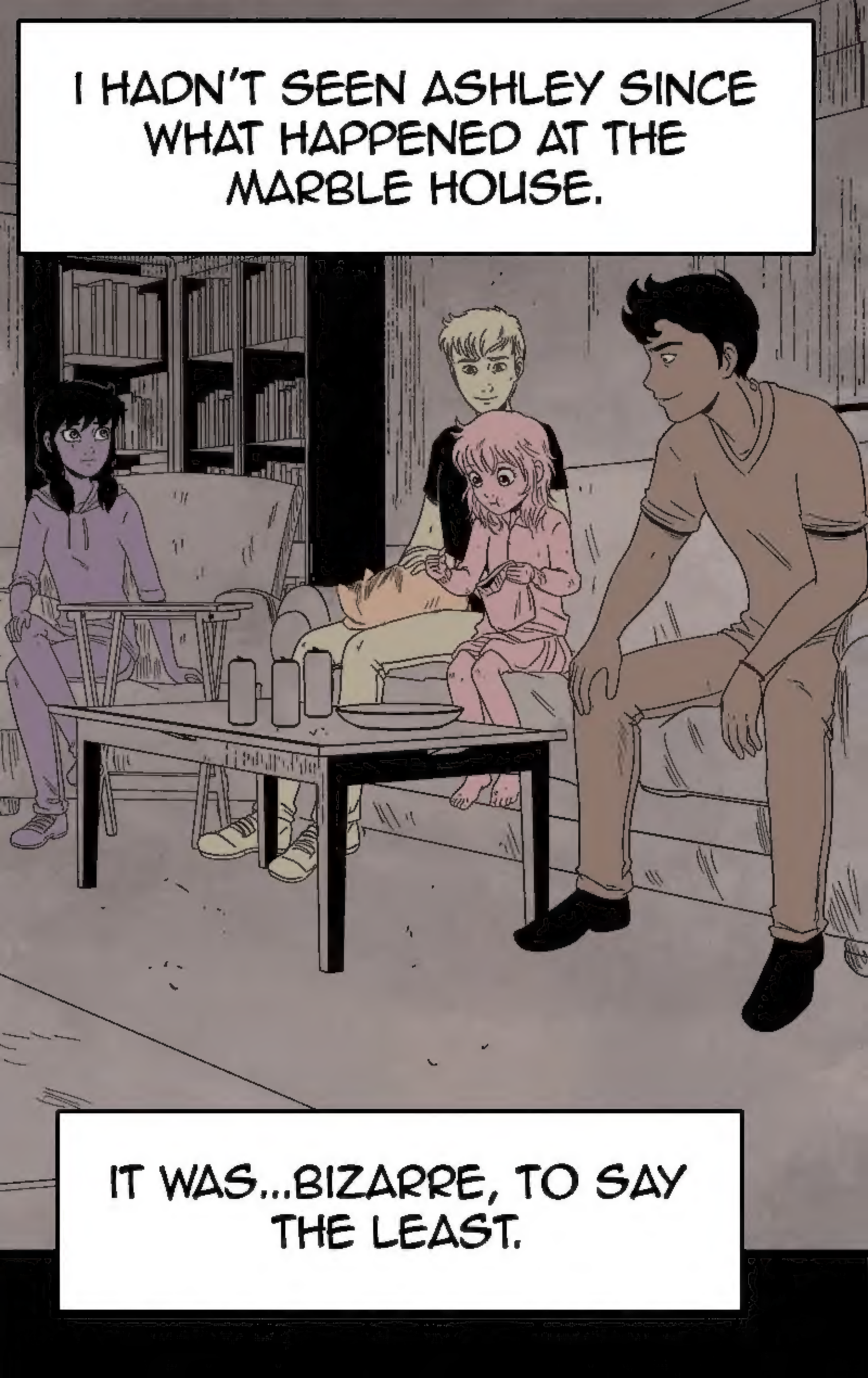
WOAH, SLOW DOWN THERE, LITTLE MUNCHKIN!


GONNA GIVE YOURSELF A TUMMYACHE.
CRUNCH
CRUNCH

GOOD THING WE REMEMBERED TO PACK SNACKS...

PLAYTIME

PART TWO


I HADN'T SEEN ASHLEY SINCE WHAT HAPPENED AT THE MARBLE HOUSE.
IT WAS...BIZARRE, TO SAY THE LEAST.

I SPENT SO MUCH TIME BEING AFRAID OF THOSE CHILDREN. I HAD SO MANY NIGHTMARES.

BUT NOW WE WERE HERE, SURROUNDED BY THE THINGS BOBBY LEFT BEHIND.

I FOUND I WASN'T VERY SCARED AT ALL NOW.
PROBABLY BECAUSE I'D SEEN SO MUCH WORSE IN THE MEANTIME.

SHE WAS DIRTY AND NEEDED SHOES AND NEW CLOTHES.

HOW LONG HAD SHE BEEN BY HERSELF?

I THOUGHT THE CHILDREN AND MRS. DAVIDS HAD LEFT TOWN AGES AGO.

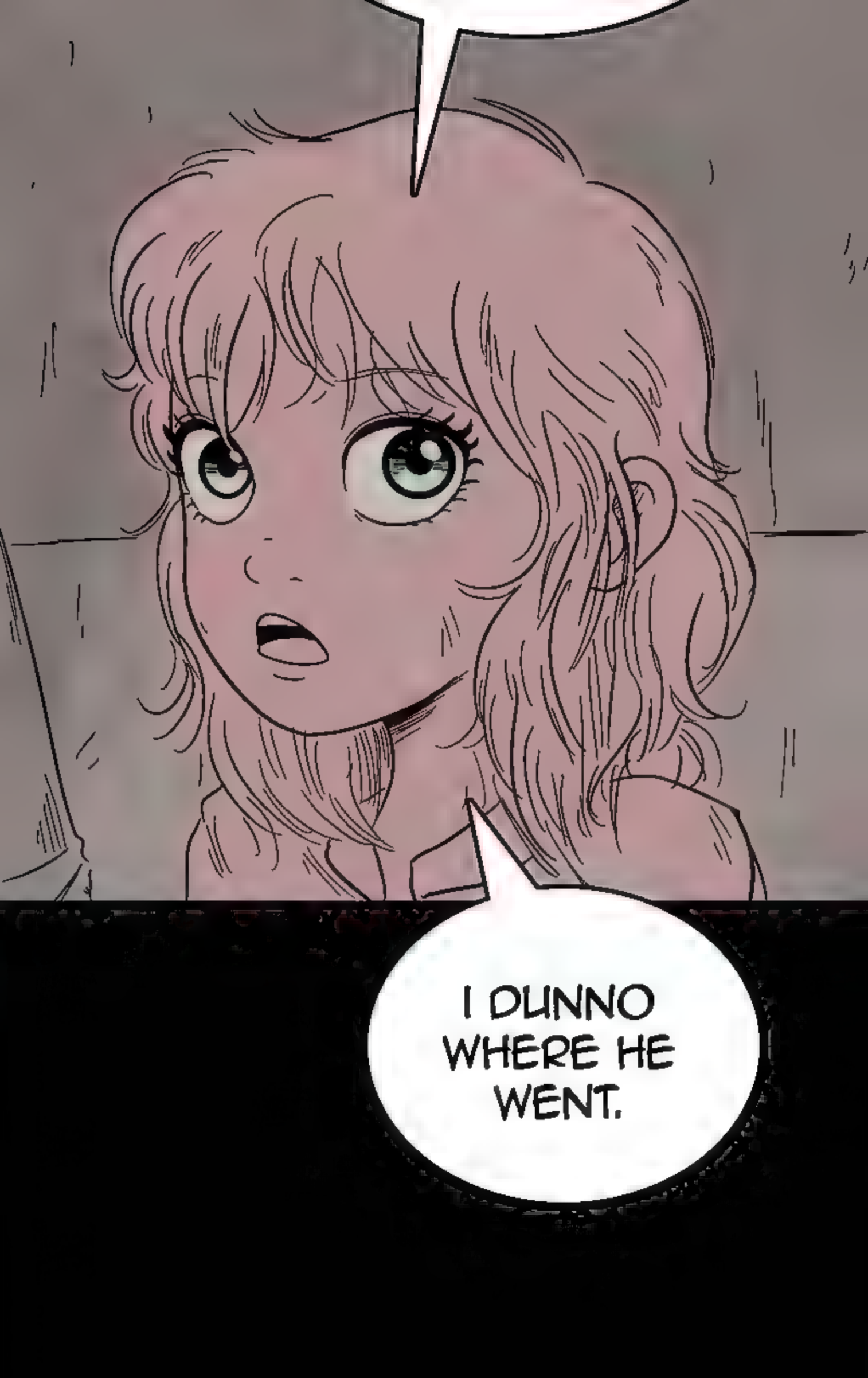
WHY CAN'T I SEEM TO TRUST ANYTHING THAT I THOUGHT WAS TRUE?

HEY, SWEETIE?
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN

HERE, ANYWAY?

I DUNNO. A LONG TIME.

I WAS IN THE SHED AT FIRST, BUT THEN THE MAN WHO LIVES HERE WASN'T HERE ANYMORE, SO I CAME INSIDE.


I DUNNO WHERE HE WENT.

HOW DID YOU EVEN GET HERE?
AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE WITH THE OTHER KIDS?

NO, I DIDN'T WANT TO GO.

AFTER FRANKIE LEFT, MRS. DAVIDS SAID WE HAD TO GO AWAY.

SHE SAID WE WERE GOING TO GO AWAY ON THE TRAIN.

WE WENT TO THE TRAIN STATION AND THEN WE HAD TO WALK ON THE TRACKS FOR A LONG TIME.
THERE WAS AN OLDER BOY, NOAH, WHO WAS MY FRIEND, AND HE SAID MRS. DAVIDS WAS LYING.

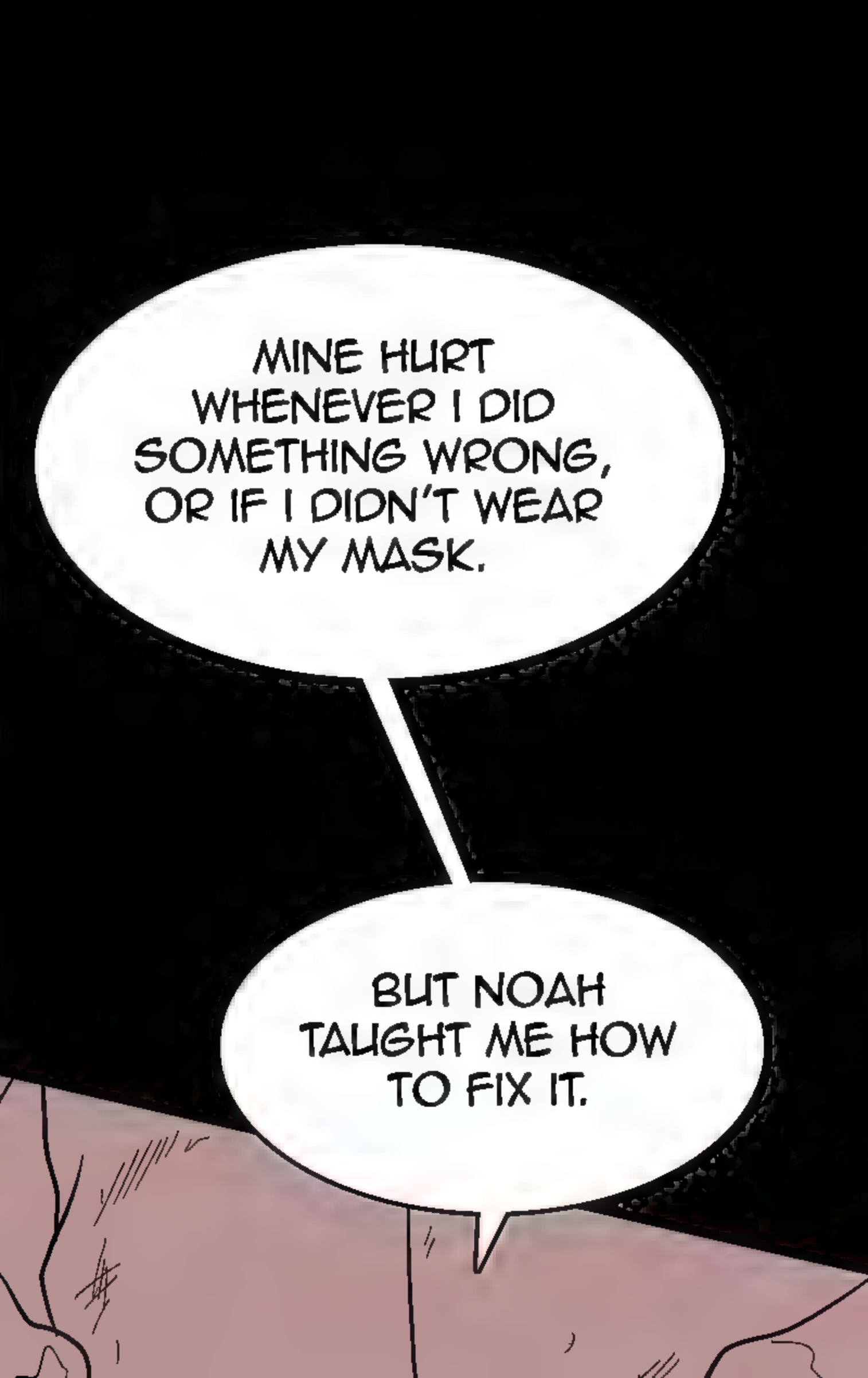
HE SAID
WE SHOULD
RUN AWAY.

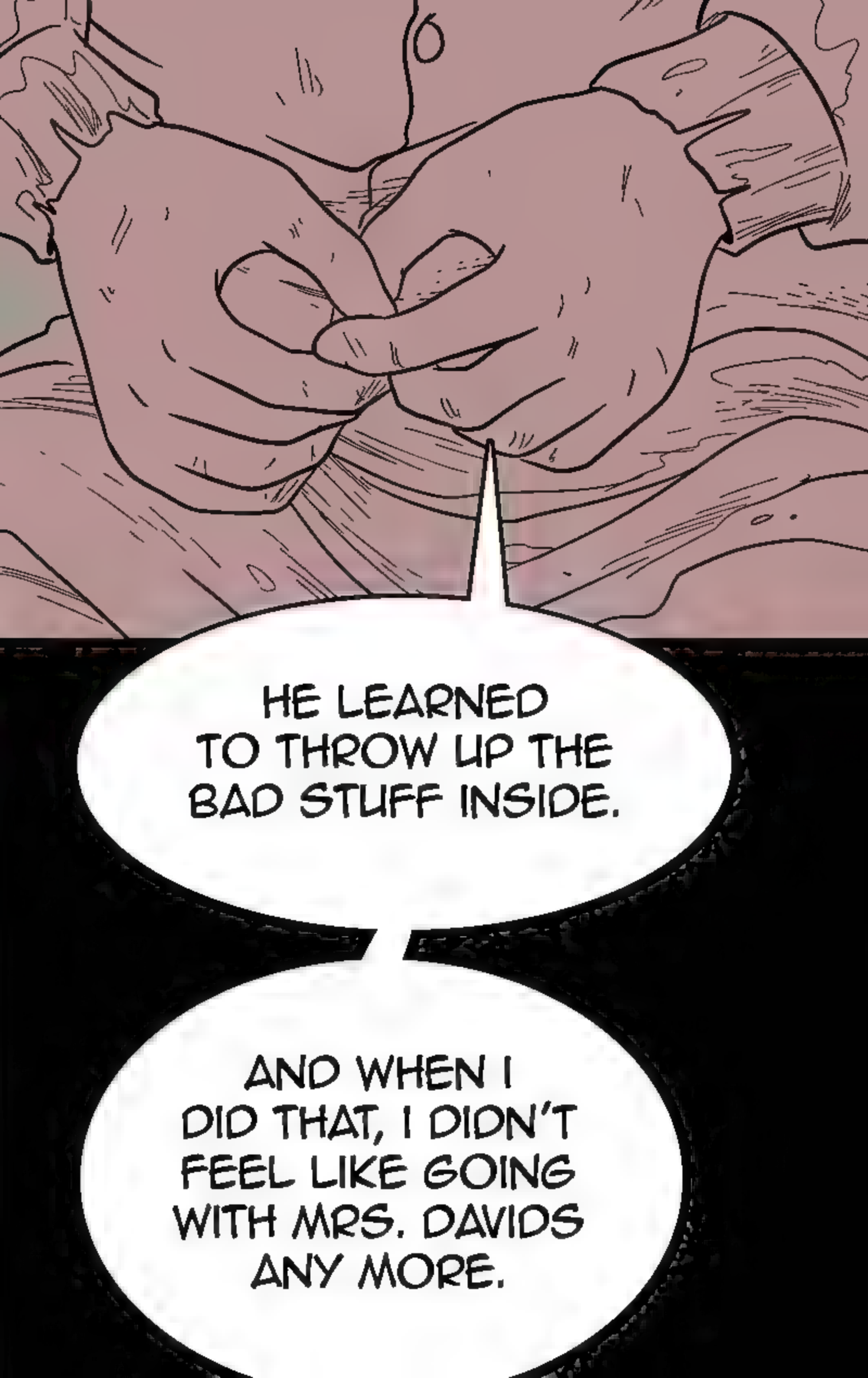
SO WE RAN AWAY WHEN NO ONE WAS WATCHING.

THEY DIDN'T TRY TO CHASE

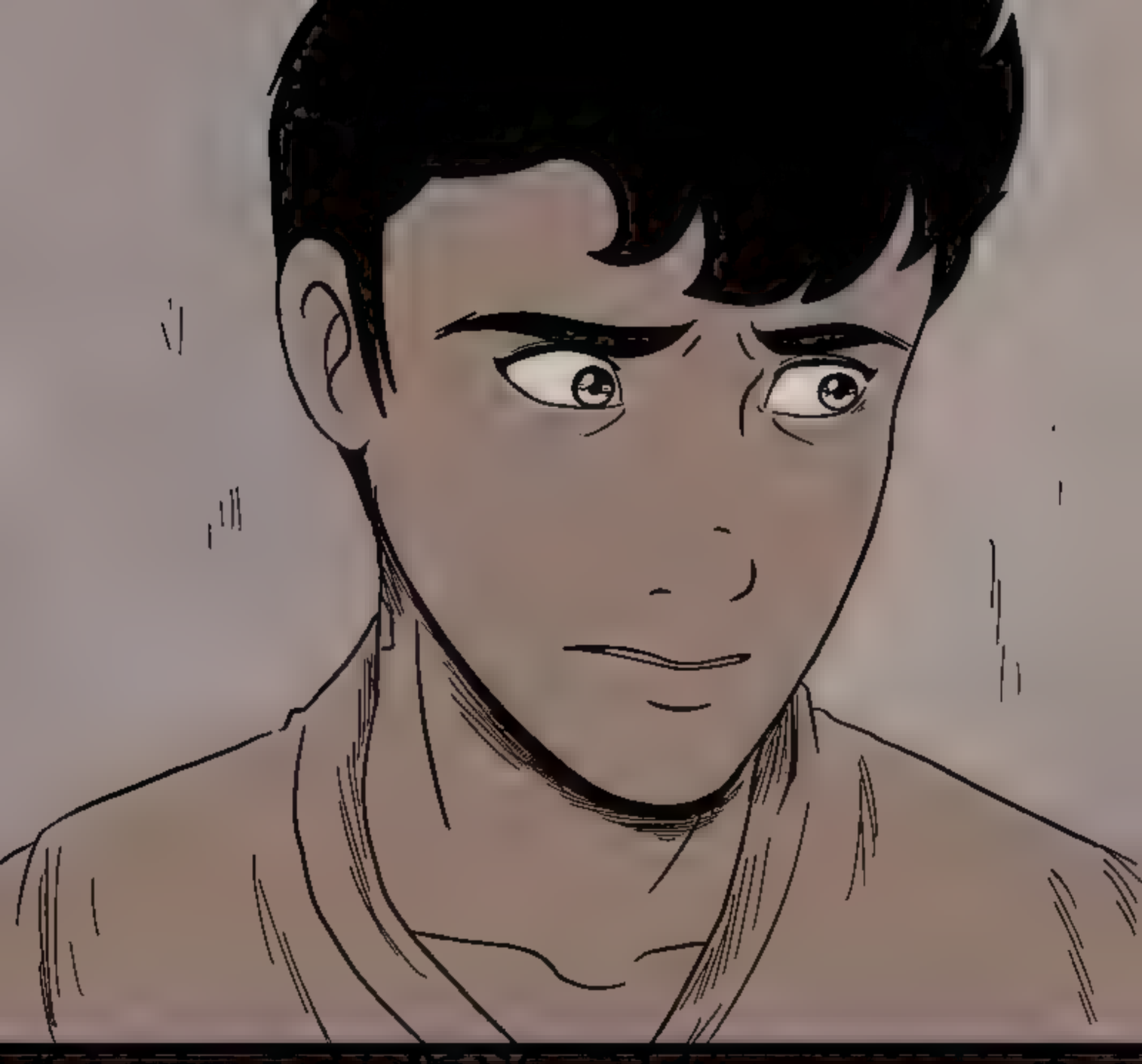
TRY TO CHASE
YOU AT ALL?

NO. MAYBE
THEIR STOMACHS
HURT TOO MUCH.


MINE HURT WHENEVER I DID SOMETHING WRONG, OR IF I DIDN'T WEAR MY MASK.
BUT NOAH TAUGHT ME HOW TO FIX IT.


HE LEARNED TO THROW UP THE BAD STUFF INSIDE.
AND WHEN I DID THAT, I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE GOING WITH MRS. DAVIDS ANY MORE.

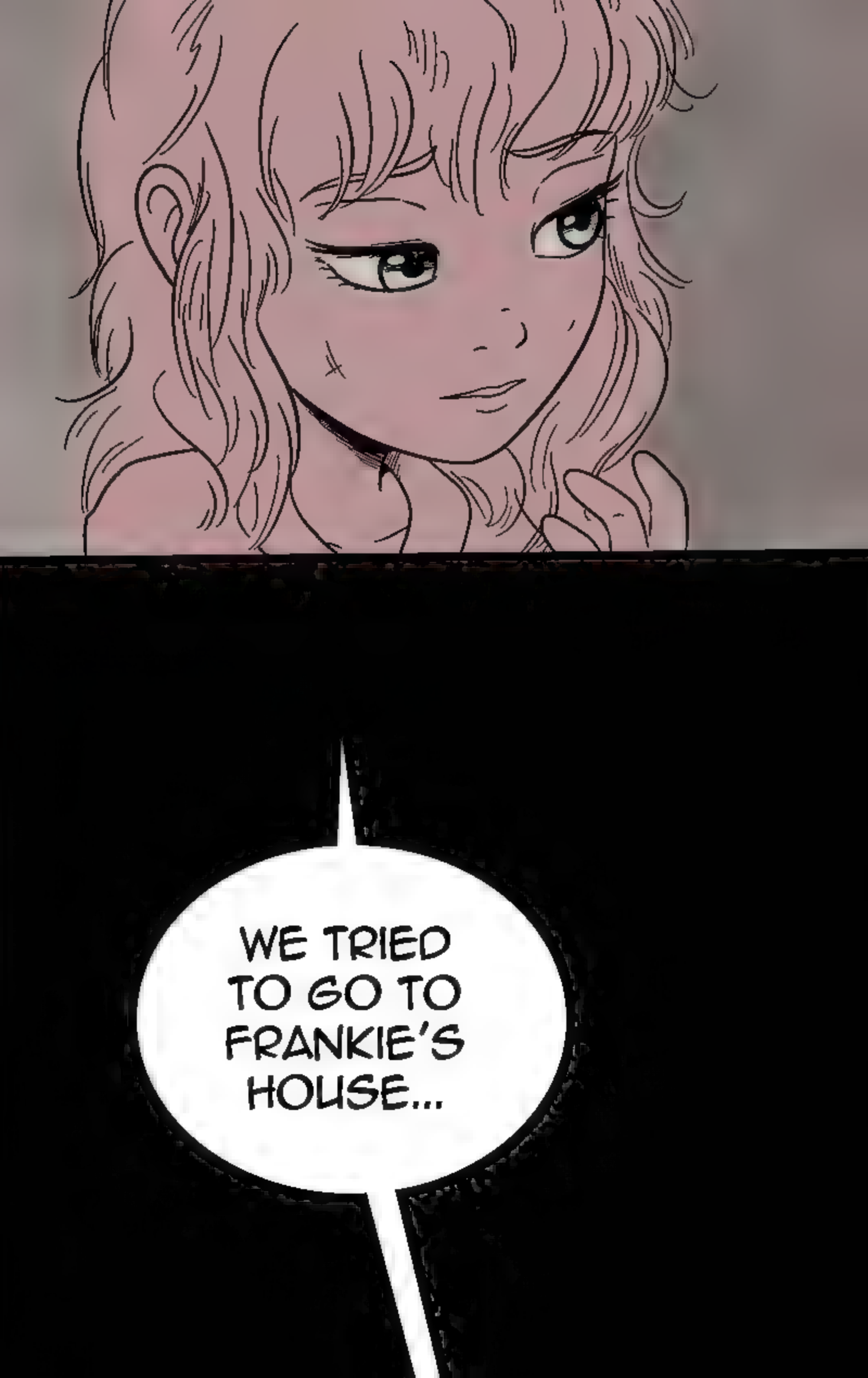
YEAH.
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, KID.

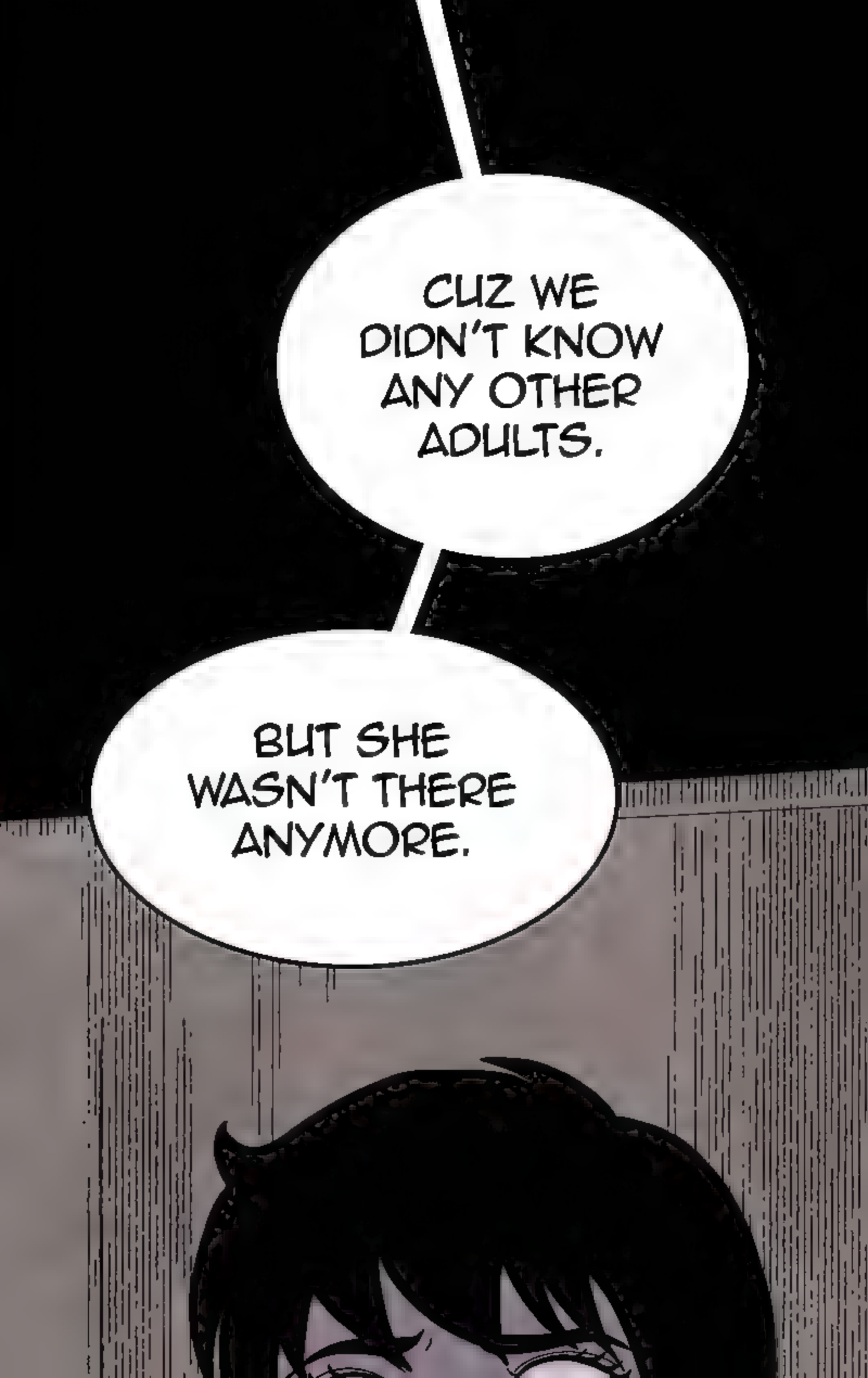


ASHLEY, *WHY* WAS MRS. DAVIDS LIKE THAT?
WHY DID ALL THOSE BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO YOU?
I...
I DUNNO.

I WAS TIRED A LOT.
IF I DID WHAT MRS. DAVIDS TOLD ME TO, MY STOMACH WOULDN'T HURT.

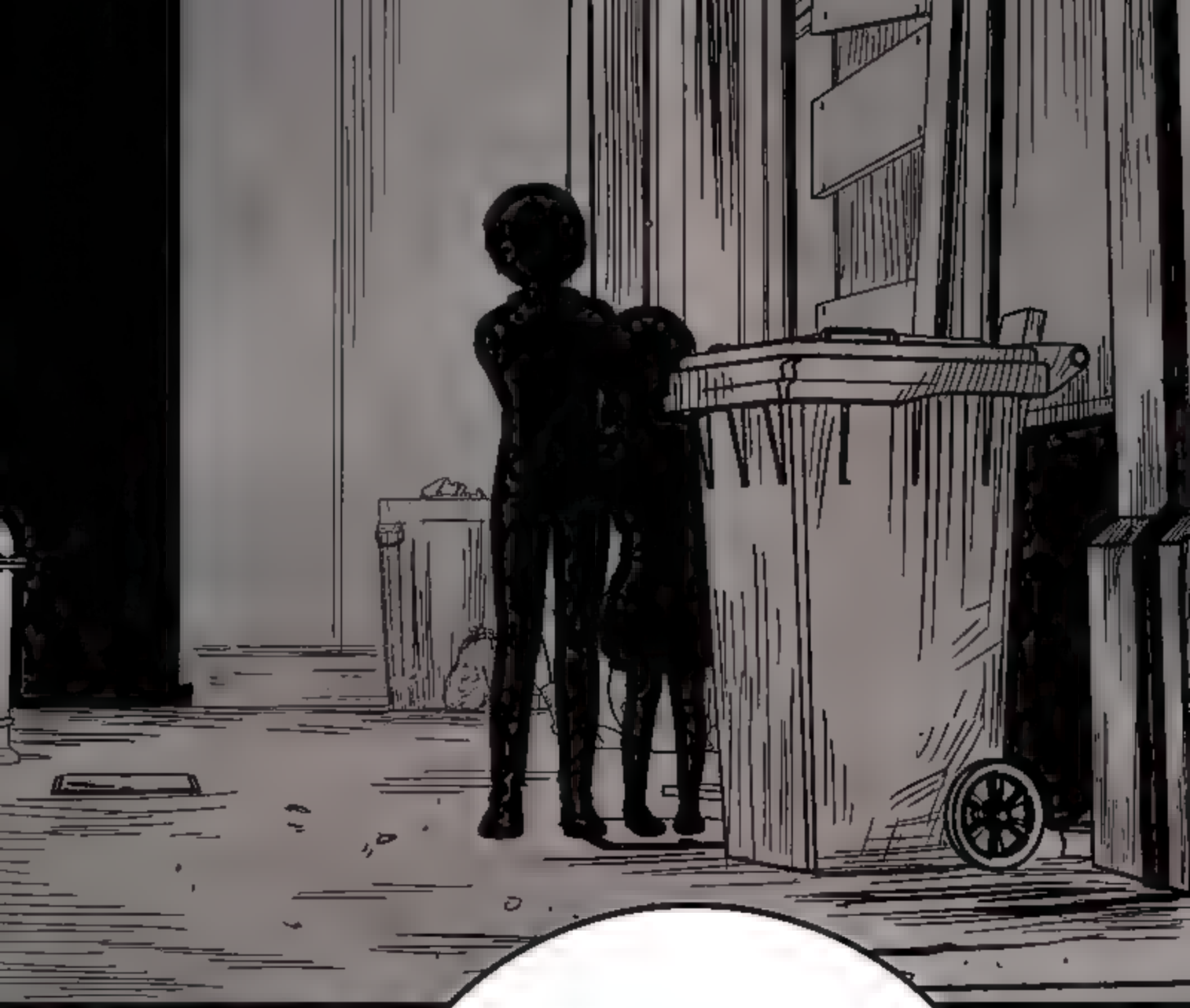
BUT THEN WE RAN AWAY.
AND I WAS HUNGRY A LOT.


WE TRIED TO GO TO FRANKIE'S HOUSE...


CUZ WE DIDN'T KNOW ANY OTHER ADULTS.
BUT SHE WASN'T THERE ANYMORE.

SO WE HID IN TOWN AND PLACES.

THEN A LONG TIME LATER, WE FOUND THE SHED.

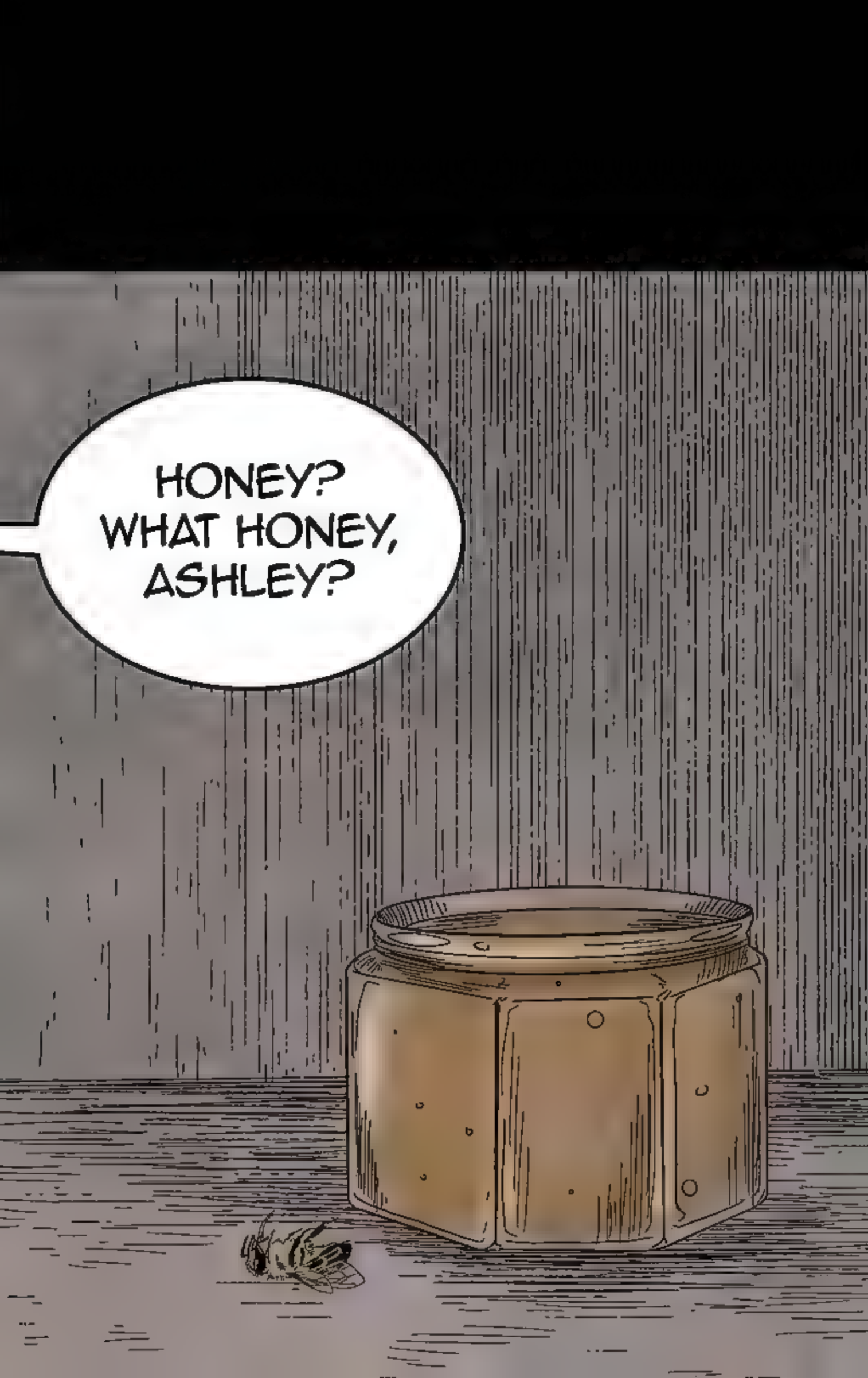

AN' IT WAS BETTER THAN BEING IN TOWN, WITH NOWHERE TO SLEEP.

THEN A BIG THING CAME FOR US.
A...BIG THING?

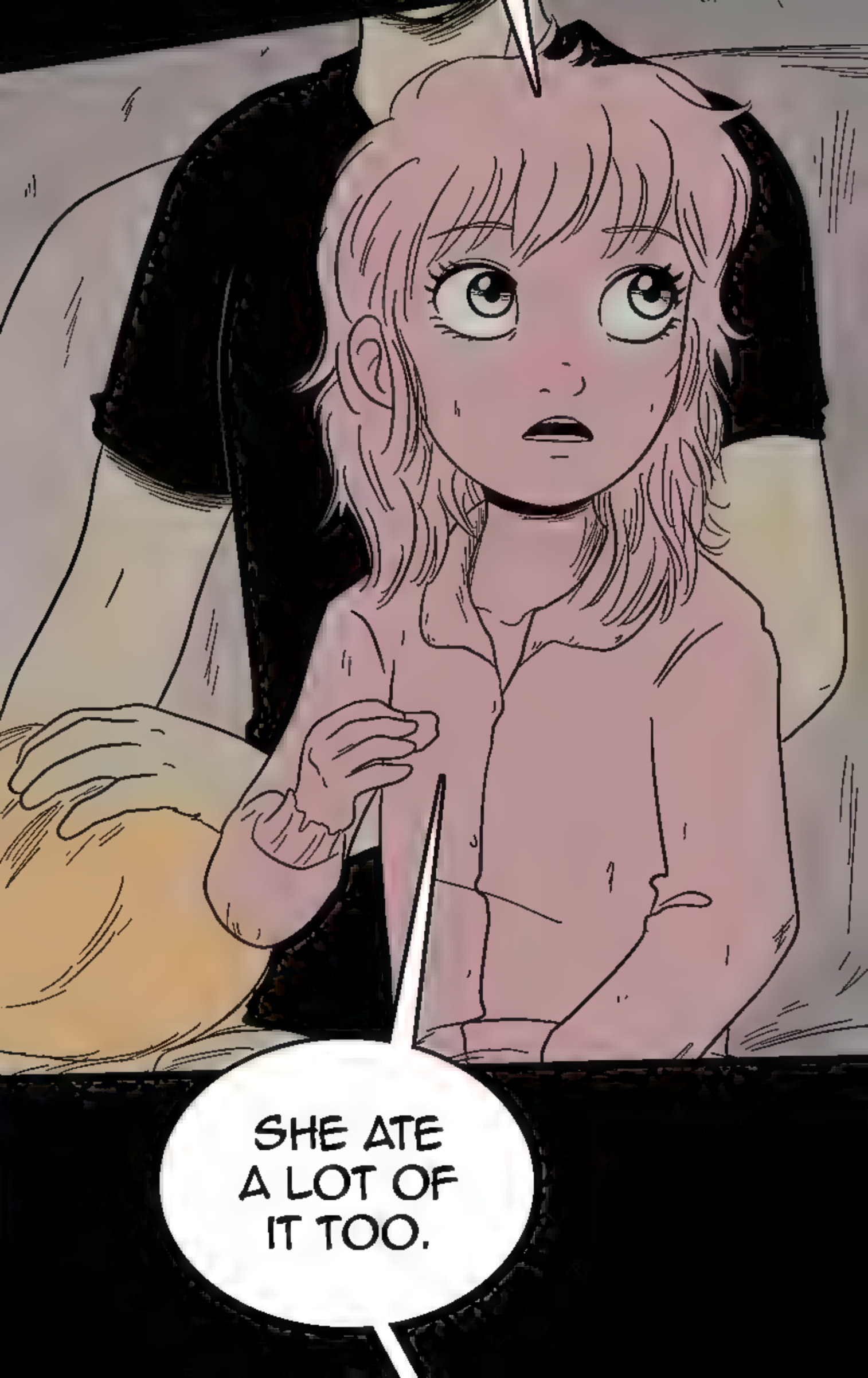
WHAT KIND?
I-IT WAS BIG.

AND
SCARY.

IT BEAT UP NOAH, BUT HE MADE IT RUN AWAY.
HE GOT HURT, BUT WE STILL HAD SOME HONEY WITH US.


HONEY?
WHAT HONEY,
ASHLEY?

IT'S A GOOD KIND.
MRS. DAVIDS GAVE IT TO US WHEN WE GOT TOO SICK, OR IF WE TURNED WEIRD-LOOKING.


SHE ATE A LOT OF IT TOO.

I DUNNO WHERE SHE GOT IT, BUT WE HAD A WHOLE CUPBOARD, AND WE BROUGHT IT WITH US.

HMMM... JEREMY, THERE WERE JARS OF A STRANGE HONEY AROUND YOU WHEN WE FOUND

YOU DOWN BELOW.
HUH.
MAYBE IT'S...

SOME KIND OF STABILIZER? OR ANTIDOTE?

SOMETHING TO KEEP THE BLACK STUFF FROM CORRUPTING SOMEONE TOO QUICKLY?

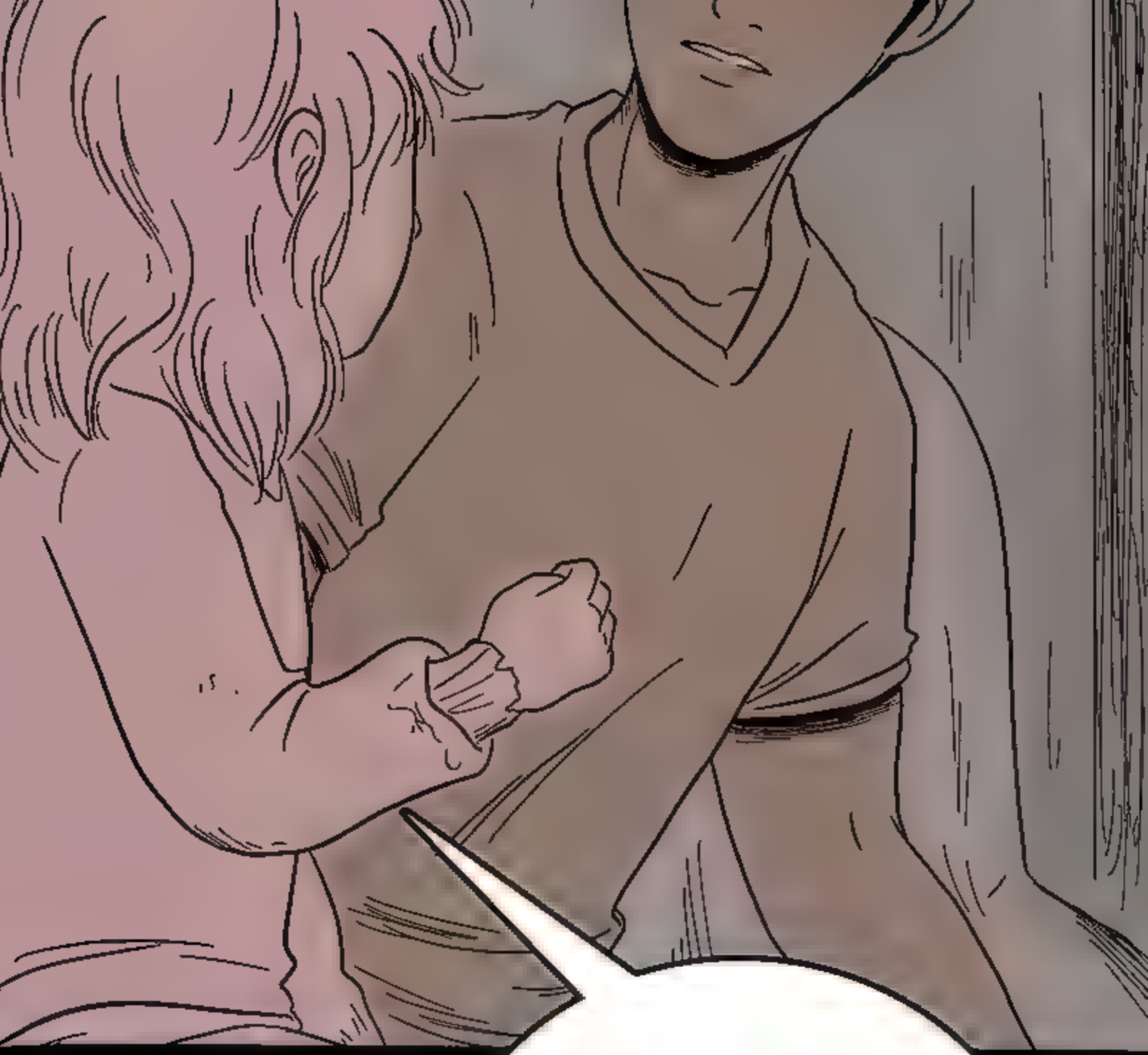
ASHLEY, TELL US ABOUT YO-
HEY.
IT'S PAST DAWN NOW, J. WE CAN QUIZ HER MORE LATER.

RIGHT NOW
THIS LITTLE ONE
NEEDS A NAP.
YAWN

I GOTTA... FEED NOAH FIRST.

HE HAS TO EAT HIS

HONEY SO HE CAN GET BETTER.
WAIT, WHAT?
THERE'S ANOTHER KID HERE?

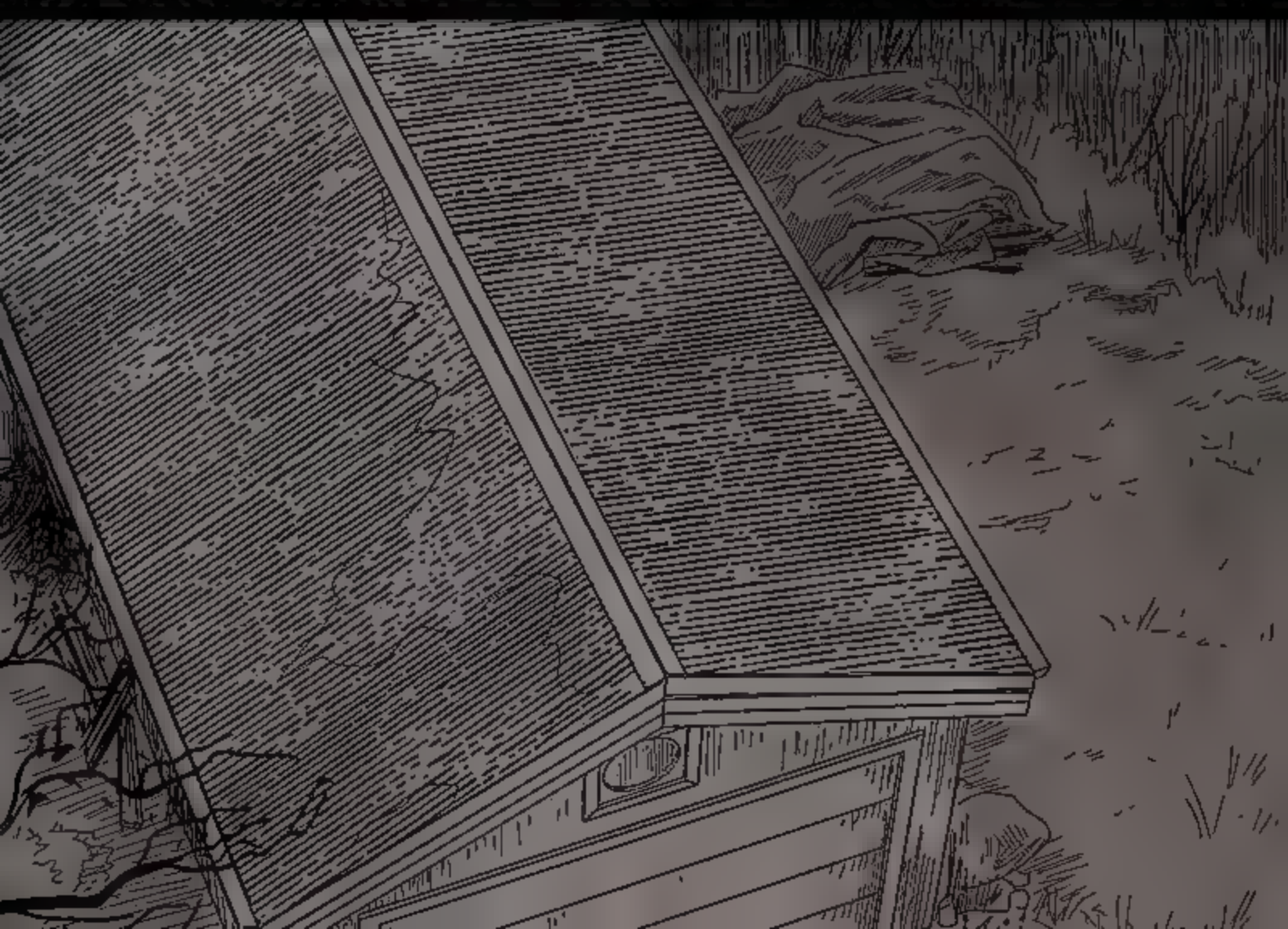

YEAH, NOAH'S SLEEPING IN THE SHED.
HE SAID NOT TO BOTHER HIM.

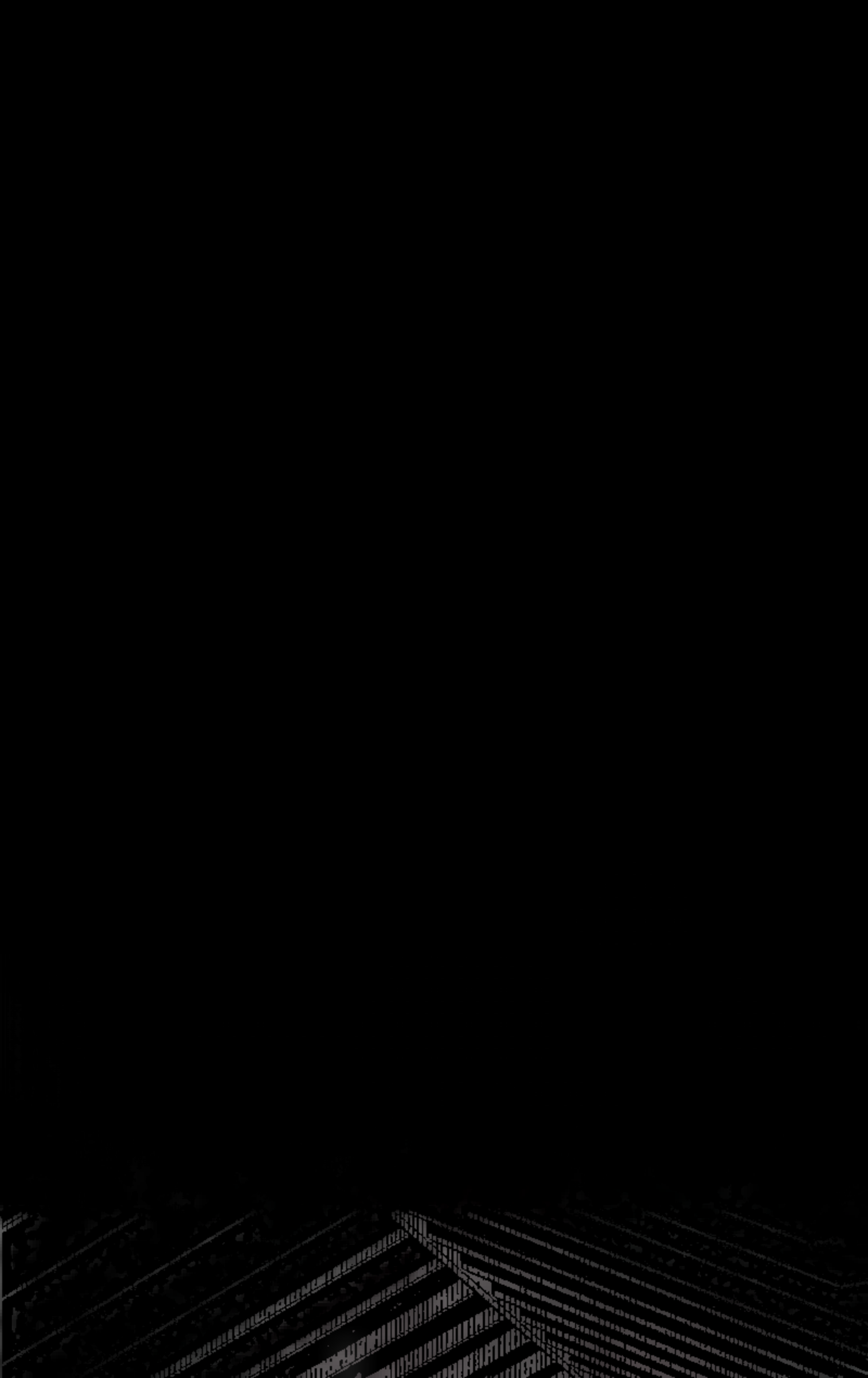
THE BIG THING HURT HIM BAD, BUT HE SAID HE'LL GET BETTER.

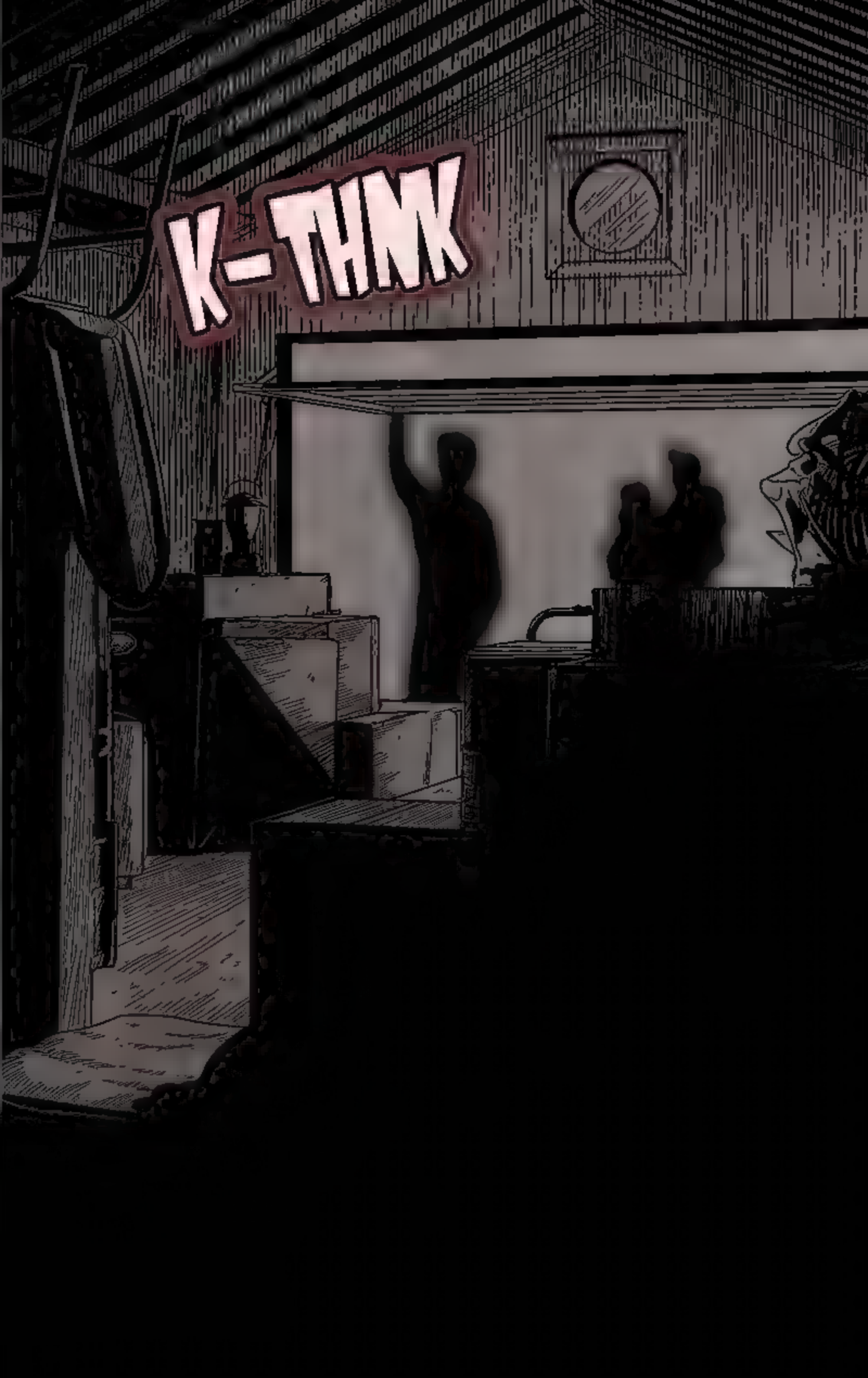
BUT, UM...

ALL HE
DOES IS

SLEEP A
LOT.

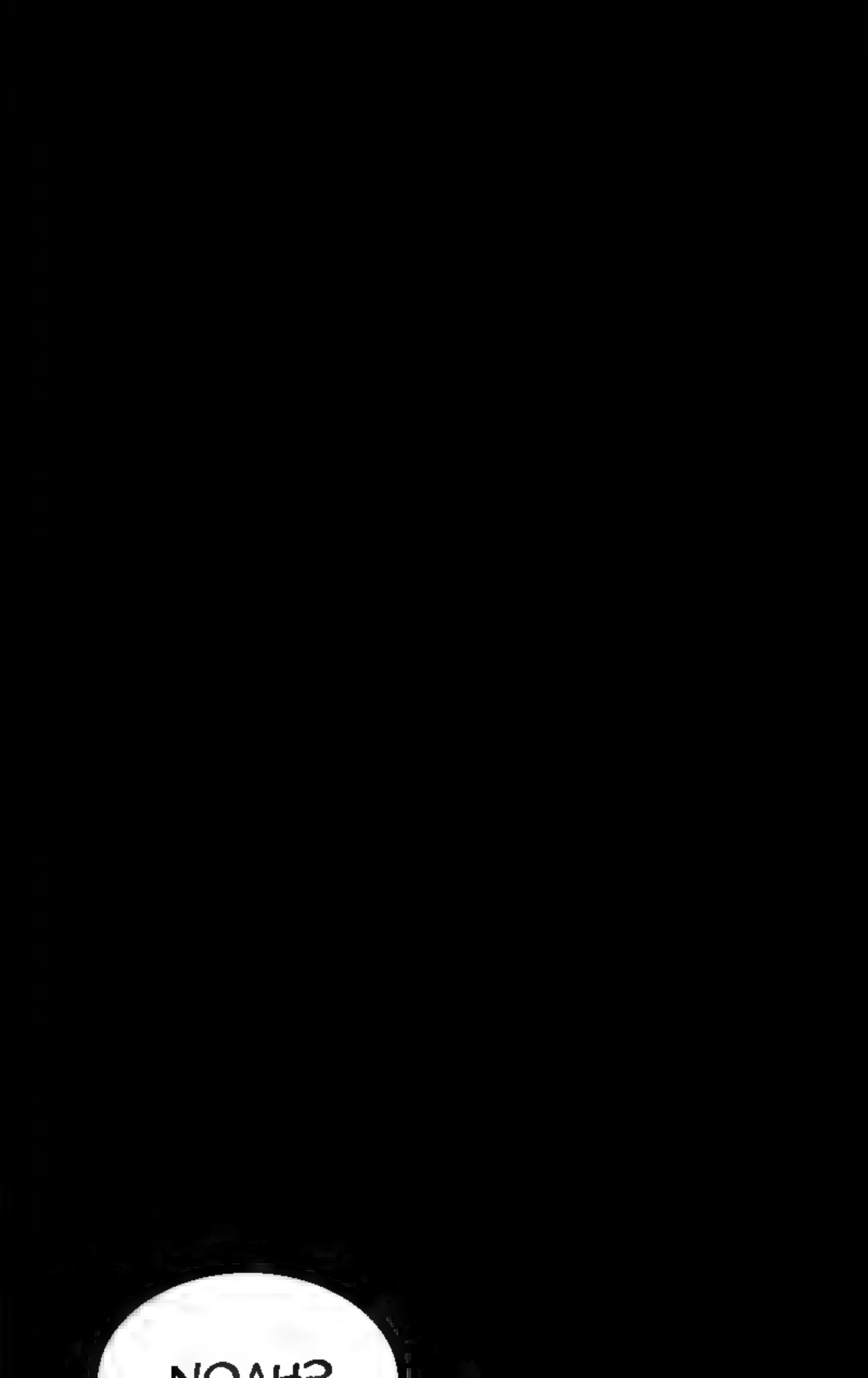





K-THNK

NOAH? IT'S ME, FRANKIE.
ARE YOU HERE?
HE'S IN THE BACK.

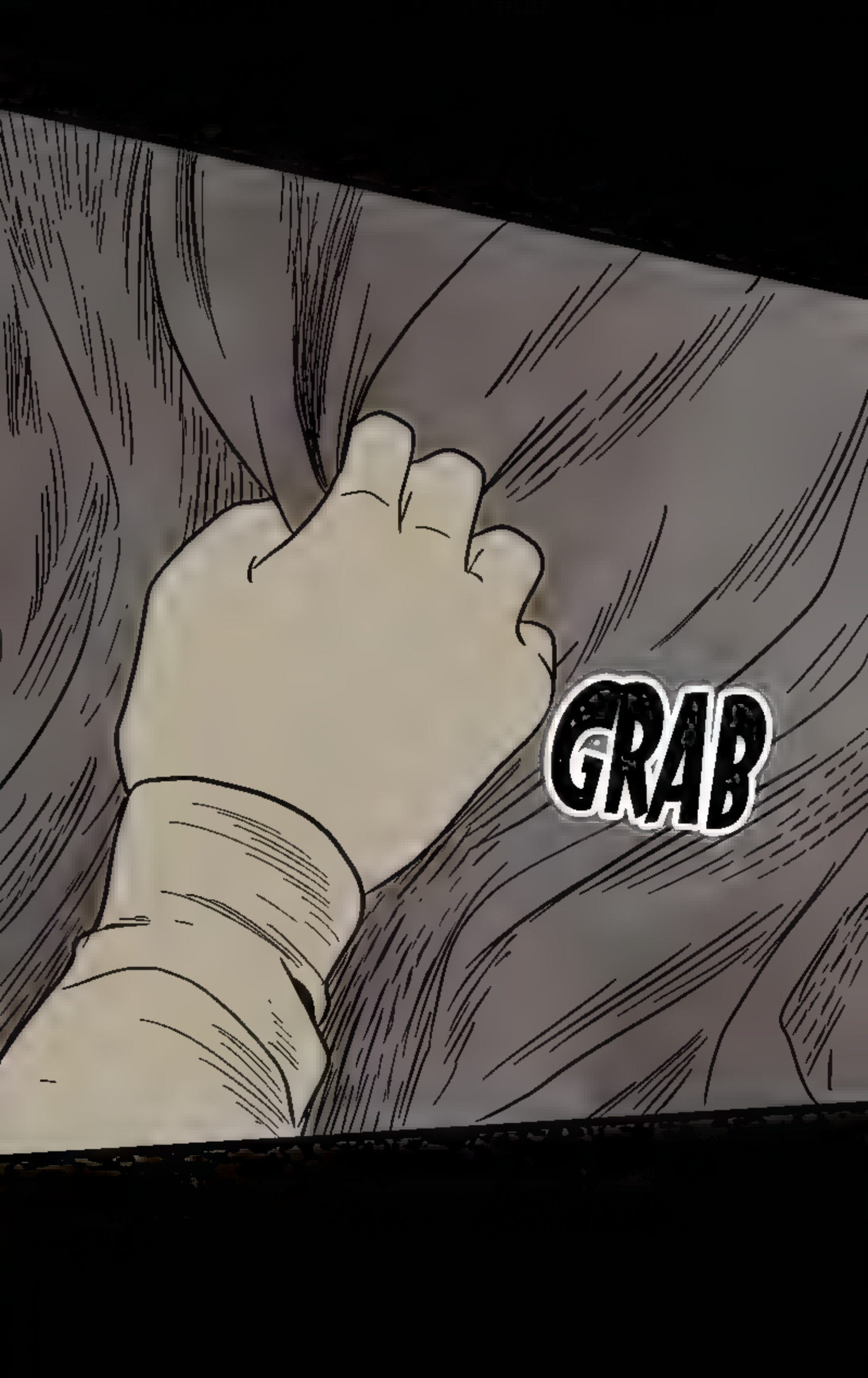
BEHIND THE BOXES.

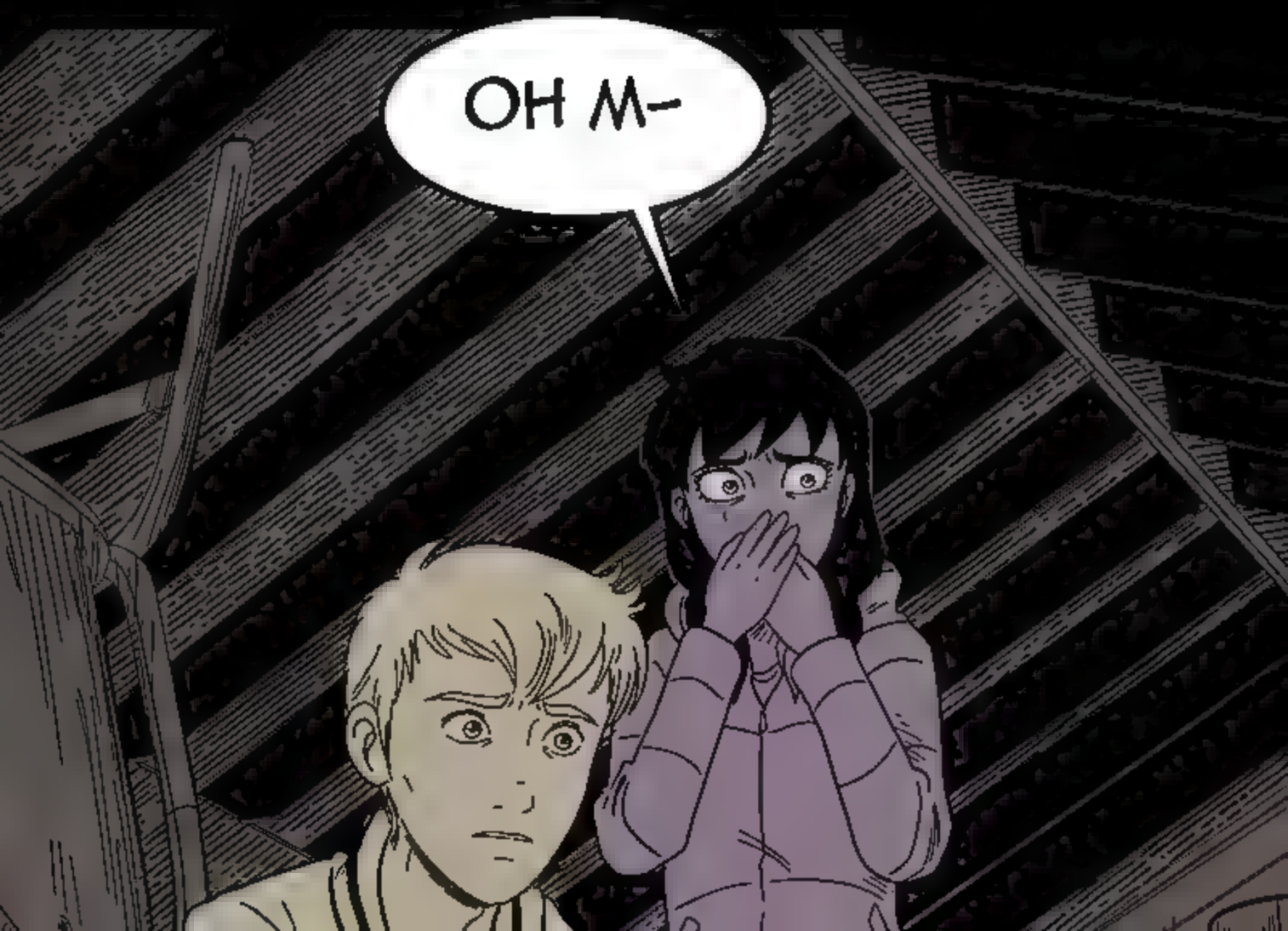

NOAH?

NOAH?
ARE YOU ASLEEP?

NOAH...

NOAH, IT'S MISS FRANKIE! WAKE UP, DUMMY!
AND MISTER OWENS IS HERE TOO!


GRAB


OH M-

NOAH? WAKE UP AND EAT!
IS HE OKAY?

IS HE WAKING UP?

H-HE'S...
HE'S J-JUST SLEEPING, ASHLEY.

WHY DON'T YOU GO INSIDE FOR A NAP, AND...
...AND JEREMY AND I WILL TAKE NOAH TO THE HOSPITAL SO HE CAN GET BETTER?

YOU CAN STAY HERE WITH FELIX.
WHAT?

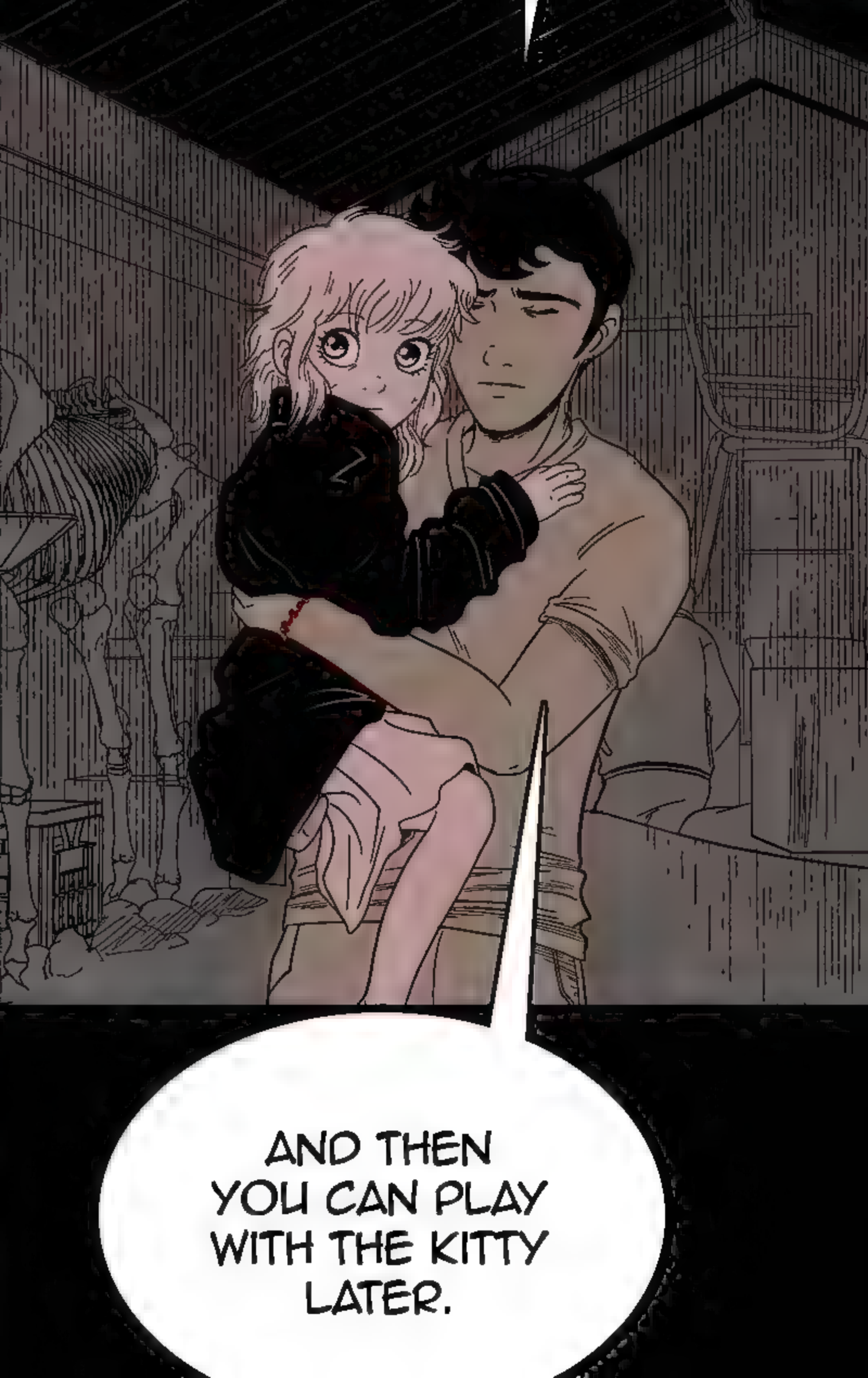
FRANKIE, WE'RE IN HIDING.
REMEMBER?

HOW ARE
WE SUPPOSED
TO JU-

I...

OH.

YEAH, UM...
C'MON, PEANUT. WE'LL GET YOU DOWN FOR A NAP, AND...


AND THEN
YOU CAN PLAY
WITH THE KITTY
LATER.

WILL THE KITTY LET ME PET HER?

S-SURE.
SURE SHE WILL, SHE'S A VERY NICE KITTY.

S-SHOULD WE...

YEAH, UM...
CAN YOU...
CAN YOU
GET SOMETHING
FROM THE CAR
FOR ME...